KANCHI

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KANCHI

An Introduction to its Architecture

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

FOREMOST among the sacred cities of South India and the capital of the imperial Pallavas for several centuries, Kanchi or Conjeevaram well deserves the tribute paid to it by the Sanskrit saying, *Nagareshu Kanchi,* meaning Kanchi, the first among the cities'. In its time, the city has witnessed violent vicissitudes of political fortunes. With a long-standing tradition of culture and philosophy, Kanchi is indeed a veritable treasure-house of monumental art.

Ancient literature and epigraphy refer to a city by various names, such as Kachchippedu, Kachchi and Kanchipuram. The most popular among them, however, is Kanchi which, in Sanskrit, means a girdle. In some inscriptions extant in the city, the southern country has been compared to a woman and the city of Kanchi described as adorning it like a belt.

PRE-PALLAVA PERIOD

The history of Kanchi can be traced back to several centuries before the advent of the Christian era; in fact, its name has been mentioned in the *Mahabhashya* of Patanjali of the second century B.C. Of Kanchi between the first and third centuries A.D., tradition and literature are the only sources of information. *Manimekalai,* the famous Tamil classic, and *Perumbanarruppadai,* a poetical work of great merit by Rudrankannanar, vividly describe the city as it was in the second century A.D. Tondaman Ilandiraiyan, the hero of *Perumbanarruppadai,* is said to have ruled over Kanchi as the viceroy some time during the second century A.D. Himself an eminent poet, he seems to have extended his patronage freely to other poets and bards. A few odes of this king, together with the *Perumbanarruppadai,* form the first Tamil poetic compositions that have come down to us from this ancient city.

In Rudrankannanar's work, there is a reference to the Vishnu temple at Tiruveha which has now been identified with the Yathodkari temple at Vishnu Kanchi. It is also believed

that the big tank at Tenneri, about 14 miles to the north-east of Kanchi, was constructed by Tondaman Ilandiraiyan. Tenneri is probably a corruption of Tiraiyaneri and the latter name occurs in a Pallava epigraph (meaning Tiraiyan's tank).

PALLAVAS

The Pallavas ruled over the territory extending from the southern bank of the river Kistna to that of the river Cauvery between the third and the ninth centuries A.D. After vanquishing the Cholas in the south, the early Pallava kings made Kanchi, which had until then been a seat of Chola viceroyalty, their capital. Accordingly, they fortified the city with high walls and surrounded it with a moat. Furthermore, they built broad and well-laid-out roads and constructed fine temples to enshrine the Pallava deities.

Simhavishnu (575-600 A.D.), Mahendravarman I (600-635 A.D.), Rajasimha alias Narasimhavarman II, (680-722 A.D.) and Nandivarman Pallava Malla (725-790 A.D.) are a few outstanding names from the Pallava dynasty. Pallava inscriptions on stone, with the exception of those by Simhavishnu and Narasimhavarman I, are still extant in Kanchi.

Of all the Pallava kings mentioned above, Mahendravarman I stands out. A great aesthete and an intellectual of great merit, a playwright and musician, he has left the stamp of his genius on the art and literature of his period. And to this illustrious king are to be attributed the rock-cut temples in South India.

The Pallava kings were not, however, left free to carry on their rule peacefully in South India. They were constantly distributed by contemporary powers,—the Chalukyas, the Kadambas, the Gangas and the Rashtrakutas. Twice during the 600 years of their reign, the Pallava capital was severely attacked by the Chalukyas. They were, however, able not only to withstand these attacks, but also to ward off some of the minor incursions, and thus succeeded in retaining their sway over the capital until the middle of the ninth century. It was during the latter half of that century, however, that their strength began to show signs of decline. The Cholas and the Pandyas, availing themselves of this opportunity, marched against the Pallavas, and in the battle that ensued, the last Pallava king, Aparajita, suffered defeat and death.

CHOLAS

With the death of Aparajita in the year 880 A.D., the Pallava rule in Kanchi came to a close. Aditya I, the son and successor of Vijayalaya, who was the founder of the revived Chola line in Tanjore and the victor of the Sripurambiyam battle, annexed Kanchi, and it subsequently became one of his important provincial capitals. Thus, once again after many centuries, the Cholas, who had earlier lost Kanchi to the Pallavas, re-established their rule which lasted till the end of the thirteenth century, except for a very brief interval

during which the city had passed into the hands of the Rashtrakutas.

A large number of Chola inscriptions found on the walls of the temples at Kanchi reveal the importance of the city as a base of administrative operations and also speak of the rulers as great bestowers of gifts. We further learn that the Chola kings, Rajendra I and Kulottunga I, often resided in the palace at Kanchi which had an *abhisheka mandapa* attached to it; it was here that they distributed important gifts. Thanks to the weakness of the later Chola rulers and the confusion caused by the invasion of Malik Kafur, Kanchi passed into the hands of the Mohammadans for a short time. Though historians, including Ali Bin Aziz-Ullah Tabataba, have testified that the invasion had been a devastating one, it is impossible to estimate its precise magnitude for want of confirmative evidence. Though such versions may very often prove to be exaggerated, they cannot be wholly discounted. Two centuries later Kanchi, we learn, was wrested from the Mohammadans by the Vijayanagara kings.

VIJAYANAGARA PERIOD

From the middle of the fourteenth to the beginning of the seventeenth century, Kanchi remained under the suzerainty of the Vijayanagara kings. From a large number of inscriptions found at Kanchi belonging to the Vijayanagara period, beginning with the rule of Kampana II up to that of Venkatapati (1368-1605), it can be inferred that, for the Vijayanagara kings, as for the Cholas, Kanchi was the seat of viceroyalty. Besides being a source of information on one of the great benefactions of Krishnadevaraya and Achyutaraya, the inscriptions also throw light on the military activities of some of the Vijayanagara monarchs.

BRITISH PERIOD

Kanchi was captured by the Golkonda Mohammadans in 1646, by the Mahrattas in 1677 and by Zulfikar Khan, a general of Aurangzeb. It remained in the possession of the Mohammadans till 1752. The city was sacked by the French once in 1757 and again in 1760. Later, however, it was taken over by the British.

Buddhism, Jainism, Saivism and Vaishnavism—the two latter sects particularly—had a significant following in Kanchi. That the social and political history of Kanchi has been, at every stage, profoundly influenced by diverse religions from early times is thus obvious.

BUDDHISM

Although Yuan Chwang, the Buddhist scholar from China, was of the opinion that Buddhism in Kanchi was as old as the Buddha himself, it is difficult to accept his view for want of convincing evidence. There is, however, strong evidence to show that Buddhism had already taken deep root in Kanchi by the beginning of the first century A.D.

The great Hindu revival of the seventh and eighth centuries and the

lack of royal patronage for the Buddhist cause under the Pallavas, the Cholas and the Vijayanagara kings had greatly undermined the vitality of this religion. It was only natural that the influence of Buddhism should, therefore, have declined in South India. However, sporadic groups, preaching the *dharma* of the Buddha, continued to exist till the end of the thirteenth century.

During the seventh century, there was thus more than one *vihara* in Kanchi, preaching the eight-fold path to salvation against formidable odds. *Bhikkhus* and monks, well-informed in the Sthavira, Dhyana and Yoga schools of philosophy, held discourses in these *viharas* which were visited by Buddhists from other countries.

An exclusive class from this city thus became steeped in the culture and philosophy of Buddhism. Dignaga, Bodhidharma and Dharmapala set high standards in their mastery of Buddhistic learning. Even if their meritorious contributions were made to a religion that was not very widely professed, their proficiency was characteristic of the Kanchi of this age.

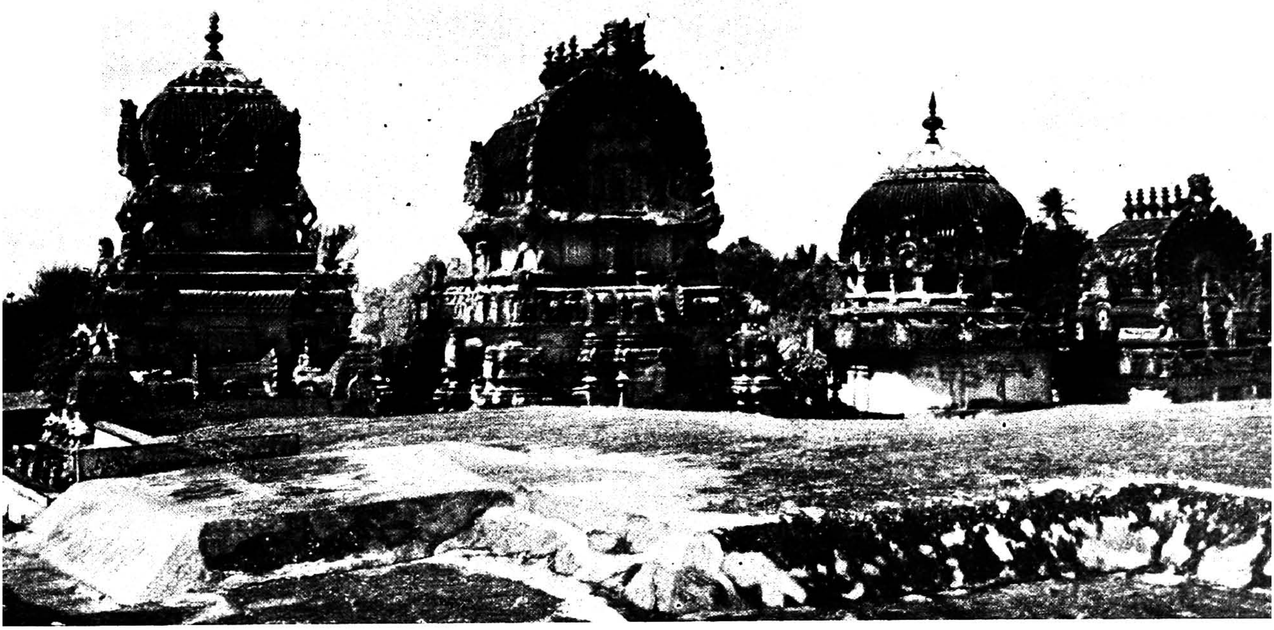
Acharya Dignaga was born of Brahmin parents in Simhavaktra, a suburb of Kanchi, some time in 500 A.D. Even as a young boy, he showed a marked inclination to the learning of Buddhist philosophy and logic. He left the place of his birth, and having mastered the Mahayana and the Hinayana systems of Buddhist philosophy, he travelled a great deal in the Telugu country and Maharashtra. At the University of Nalanda, where he went on invitation, he defeated a Brahmin in a heated debate. The author of many works, which are greatly admired by the Chinese and the Japanese even today, he is rightly regarded as the father of mediaeval logic. The *Pramanasamucchaya* and the *Nyaya Pravesa* are, of all his works, considered to be the best and most important.

According to the Chinese, Bodhidharma was the third son of a Pallava king of Kanchi; he abandoned his princely home, set off to China and landed at Canton about 520 A.D. He is famed as the founder of the Dhyana school of Buddhist philosophy, which, in Japan, is known as the Zen school, and is greatly revered there as the twenty-eighth patriarch. The *Lankavatara Sutra* containing the essential teachings of Zen is said to have been passed on by him to his principal disciple.

The son of a high official at Kanchi, Dharmapala is believed to have escaped to a Buddhist monastery on the eve of his wedding to the daughter of a Pallava king. Soon after, he was converted to Buddhism by Bhavaviveka, the philosopher. Much later, the Pallava king, though disappointed in the young man, received him reverentially when he visited the court at Kanchi. Eventually, Dharmapala went to Nalanda University, and remained its head until his retirement. He is well known as the author of many learned treatises on etymology and logic and the metaphysics of Buddhism.

JAINISM

Tiruparuttikunram, a suburb of



Vimanas *of the Vardhamana Jain temple at Tiruparuttikunram (Jaina-Kanchi)*

Kanchi which lies on the right bank of the river Vegavati, has long been known as Jaina-Kanchi. Since the seventh century A.D., this place has been a stronghold of Jains of the Digambara sect.

In spite of the destructive propaganda carried on against this religion under Mahendravarman I, (eminent leaders of Saivism lent their active support to this movement) Jainism weathered the storm and a determined but small community of Jains thus kept the faith alive. Even today, their descendants live in a locality adjoining the two Jaina temples in Kanchi. The Jains did not, however, confine themselves to religious activity. A succession of *gurus* and *sishyas* in Tiruparuttikunram made significant contributions to literature and philosophy in general. The memory of Mallisena Vamanasasuri, who lived some time during the earlier years of the fourteenth century, is sacred to all the Jains in Tiruparuttikunram and an epigraph in that place refers to him in terms of great commendation. Coming after him, Pushpasena, his disciple, proved to be worthy of his master and his contributions to the literature of his period were as significant as those of his *guru*. His association with Irugappa, the famous minister of Vijayanagaram, was a very fruitful one and led to the addition of certain new structures to the temple at Tiruparuttikunram.

SAIVISM AND VAISHNAVISM

Any comprehensive study of

Saivism must, of necessity, include Kanchi, for the majority of Siva temples in South India, both ancient and modern, are located in Siva Kanchi, a part of the city now known as Big Conjeevaram. On the other hand, Vishnu Kanchi or Little Conjeevaram, as it is alternatively called, contains all the temples dedicated to Vishnu.

At Kanchi, all the various sects of Saivism and the different schools of its philosophy were adequately represented. The Kapalikas and the Pasupatas, the former with their centre at the Ekambaresvara temple, are known to have flourished in Kanchi during the seventh century.

Well-maintained *mathas*, where free-boarding scholars lived and received religious instruction, were attached to some of these temples. Special mention may be made here of the *matha* of Sankaracharya which, according to a copper-plate inscription of the thirteenth century, imparted instruction in the *advaita* philosophy.

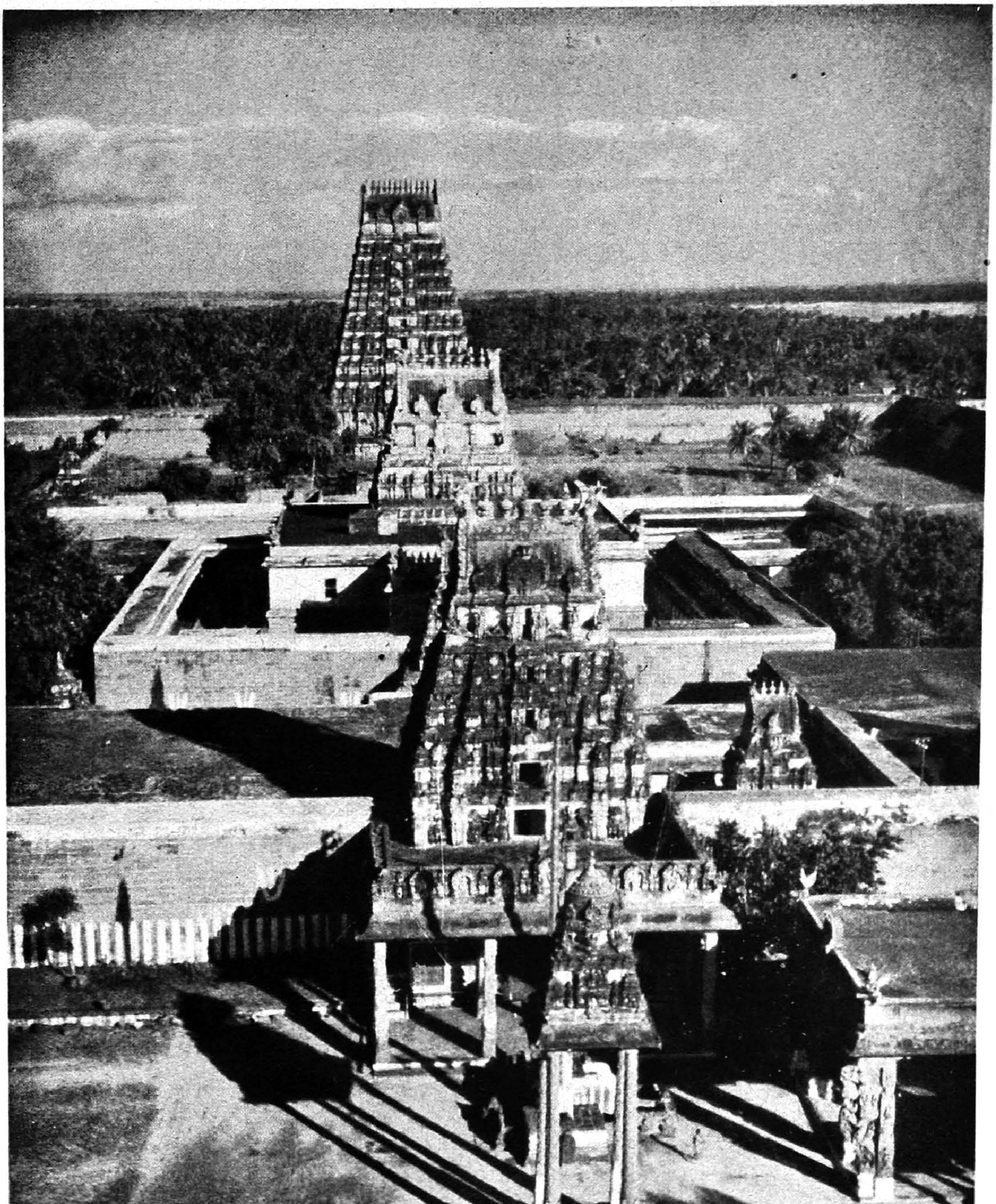
There were very few teachers and philosophers in South India who had not, at one time or the other, visited the sacred city of Kanchi. Appar and Sambandar in the seventh century and Sundaramurti in the first quarter of the ninth century, the latter well known as the Tevaram, visited this place and sang *padigams* or hymns in honour of the Saiva deities. Sankaracharya is also said to have visited Kanchi and established the Kamakoti Pitha.

As with Saivism, Kanchi was intimately associated with the history of Vaishnavism in South India. Before images of Vishnu, which abound in the temples of Kanchi, Vaishnava saints, known as *alvars*. sang His praise in *padigams*. Thus, Kanchi, more than any other place, has preemiently been the centre for the study of Vaishnava literature and philosophy. Even to this day, scholars assemble at the famous Varadarajaswami temple to discuss and study the *Visisthadvaida* system of moral philosophy which postulates that Vishnu and the universe are coextensive and, in fact, identical.

CULTURAL CENTRE

Kanchi has also been a great seat of culture. The study of Sanskrit was actively fostered by the Pallava kings, in whose court at Kanchi, poets, such as Bharavi and Dandin, recited their immortal works. The Ghatika of Kanchi, a famous institution which attracted scholars from afar, occupied a premier place in the cultural life of South India between the fourth and the ninth centuries. Appar, the Saiva poet of the seventh century and a contemporary of Mahendravarman I, described the city as a storehouse of an immeasurable wealth of knowledge and learning. Hieun Tsang, the Chinese pilgrim, who visited Kanchi in the middle of the seventh century, found the learning of the people a unique feature of the city's life.

During their maritime commercial activities, the colonists of this period carried with them the culture and civilization of Kanchi to other parts of greater India.



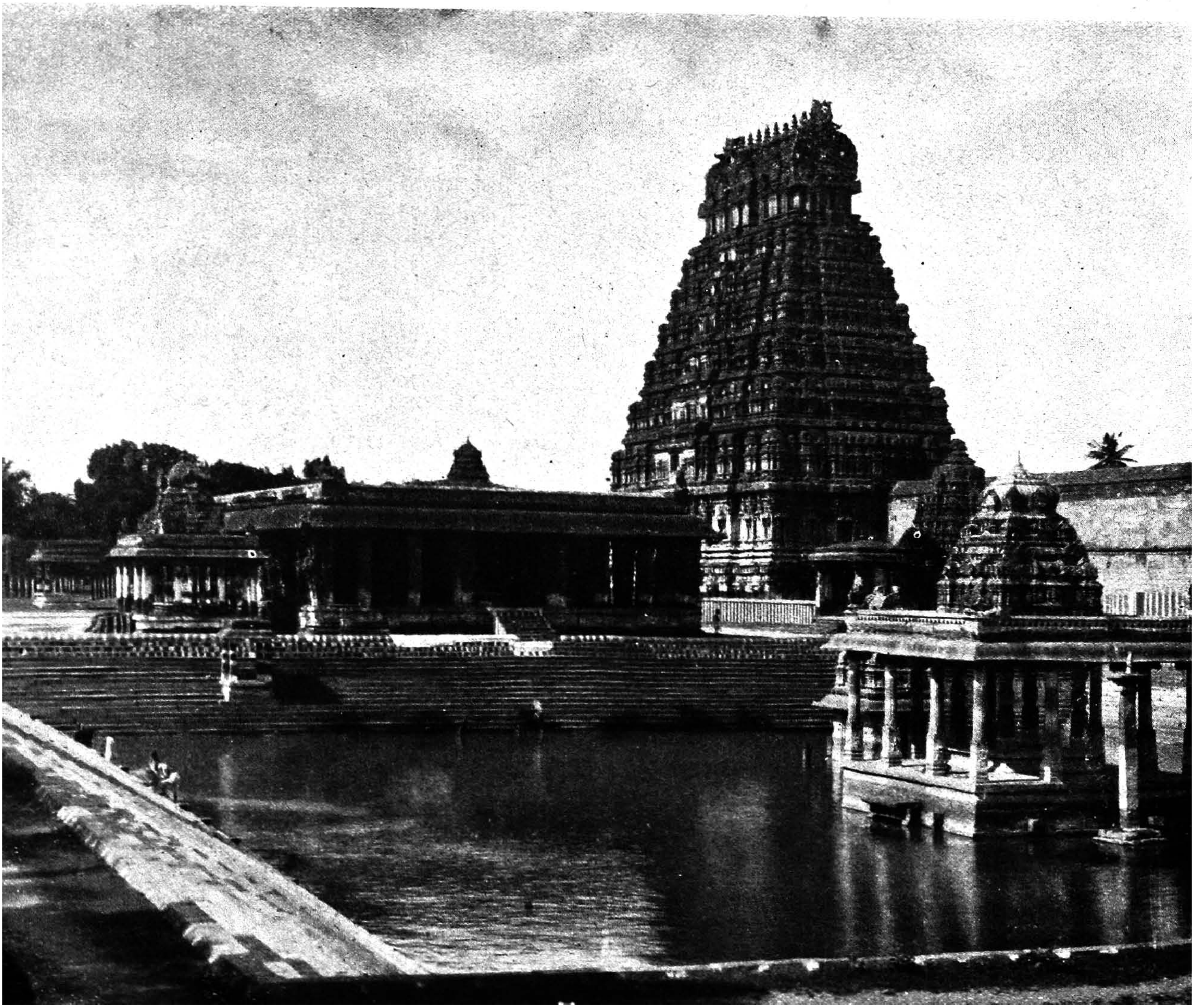
Gopuras *of the Ekambaresvara temple in Big Conjeevaram*

TOWN PLANNING

We learn from ancient literature that, while laying out the city of Kanchi, due regard was paid to the canons of town planning; the city was fortified with massive ramparts and surrounded by a deep moat, lined with a thick hedge of prickly shrub. The city had broad streets, flanked by houses tastefully built with terraces. Large tanks which were full of water, clear like crystal, and dotted with lotuses in bloom presented a magnificent view to the visitor. The city drains emptied into the moat. The open spaces in the outskirts of the city were often used by the elephant corps and the cavalry for training purposes.

Though other ancient cities, such as Madura and Vanji, were planned on similar lines, it is doubtful if they ever approached the greatness of Kanchi.

The Varadarajaswami temple with the hall of a hundred pillars



CHAPTER II

PALLAVA MONUMENTS

TEMPLES

NO VISITOR to Kanchi can fail to observe the large and imposing pyramidal towers and beautiful little shrines, nestling half-concealed among coconut groves, almost in every street. Monuments left behind by all the dynasties that ruled over South India are to be found here and while a number of them have been subjected to systematic study in the past, the information about many others remains to be sifted and collated. In fact, Kanchi affords unique opportunities for one who seeks to study the uninterrupted evolution of South Indian architecture through its various periods.

The origin of the earliest monuments in South India dates from the seventh century and the buildings of earlier periods, built presumably of impermanent materials such as brick and wood, must have ruined away with time. The Ekambaresvara, Tirumerrali, Kachisvara and the Tiruveha temples were, however, built before the seventh century; though these temples were renovated from time to time, their sanctums have remained untouched.

The earliest Pallava monuments in Kanchi consist mostly of Siva and Vishnu temples. The earliest of them all built, according to Professor Joveau Dubreuil, by King Mahendravarman I, is now lost to us, though its pillars—one of these is inscribed with the surnames of this great king—were used subsequently in the *mandapa* at the Ekambaresvara temple.

The Kailasanatha temple is situated among green paddy fields in a quiet spot to the west of Kanchi. This temple, built by Rajasimha during the first quarter of the eighth century, was known as Rajasimhesvaragriham (the abode of Rajasimha's lord).

The practice of naming the temples after their royal builders was then in vogue. In front of the temple and facing the sanctum is a couchant

The Kailasanatha temple built by King Rajasimha.

*nandi** made of sandstone and mounted on a raised platform. In South India it was customary to place the respective vehicles of deities before the temples built for them; for example, the figure of a peacock always faces a Subramanya temple and one cannot enter a Durga temple without passing the lion, her *vahana*.

In the Kailasanatha temple, the *mandapa* with the *nandi* in it is without a roof and has four Yali towers to mark the four corners of its plinth. Near the entrance to the temple, on its eastern elevation, eight small shrines stand in a row, north to south—six on the right and two on the left. The second pillar on the left stands away from the others. All the eight shrines are identical in plan and style and originally each of them had a *linga* of polished black stone in it. The Somaskanda motif is inscribed on the inner back wall of each of these shrines. But for the granite surface, which bears these inscriptions, the shrines are all built of sandstone.

* *Nandi*, Siva's vehicle, is a bull

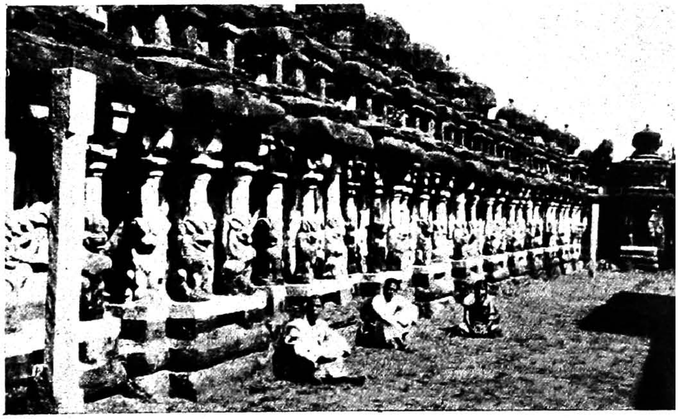
We learn from the inscription on its wall that the first shrine on the right is called Nityavinitesvaragriham (the temple of Nityavinita's Lord). Nityavinita was one of the numerous surnames adopted by Mahendravarman I and the shrine was presumably built and dedicated to him by Rajasimha, his great grandson.

The inscriptions on the third shrine reveal that it was built by Rangapataka, one of Rajasimha's queens. The fourth shrine was built by another of his queens but her name in the inscription has become illegible. We have no means of knowing the identity of those who built the others, for they bear no inscriptions of any kind. One can nevertheless be certain that they were donated by the Pallava kings.

As the visitor enters the portals of the temple he faces the *vimana* which is shaped like a horse-shoe and independent of the main temple situated behind it; this is the Mahendravarmesvaragriham, built in memory of Mahendravarman III. An inscription on its walls indicates that it was built by Mahendra, the son of Rajasimha who built the Kailasanatha temple. The sculptures in and outside this temple and the Yali pilasters in its walls are identical with those found in the Kailasanatha temple, which is situated behind it. Adjoining the sanctum in this shrine is a *mandapa*, alternatively known as an *antarala*. The sanctum also enshrines a huge *linga* which was originally installed there by Mahendra. The Somaskanda motif employed by Rajasimha in his temple is also in evidence here; the motif was presumably copied by Rajasimha's sons and his successors. The figures of the builder and his queen have been sculptured in relief on the exterior wall of the shrine. They are seated in state with attendants bearing the *charma* standing respectfully behind.

This wall overlooks a large courtyard at the other end of which is situated a hall of pillars known as the *mahamandapa.* This was originally cut off from the main shrine and a direct access to the *garbhagriha* could thus be had through the *mahamandapa.* During the Vijayanagara period the *mahamandapa* was connected with the shrine through an *antrala;* this restricted the main entrance to the southern side and thus threw the *garbhagriha* into darkness. Massive granite pillars with the lotus motif carved on them support the *mahamandapa.* (Both these sculptures and the outer wall itself have recently had to be touched up with cement). The basement of the *garbhagriha* in the Kailasanatha temple is of granite and the super-

Yali *pillars in the Kailasanatha temple*

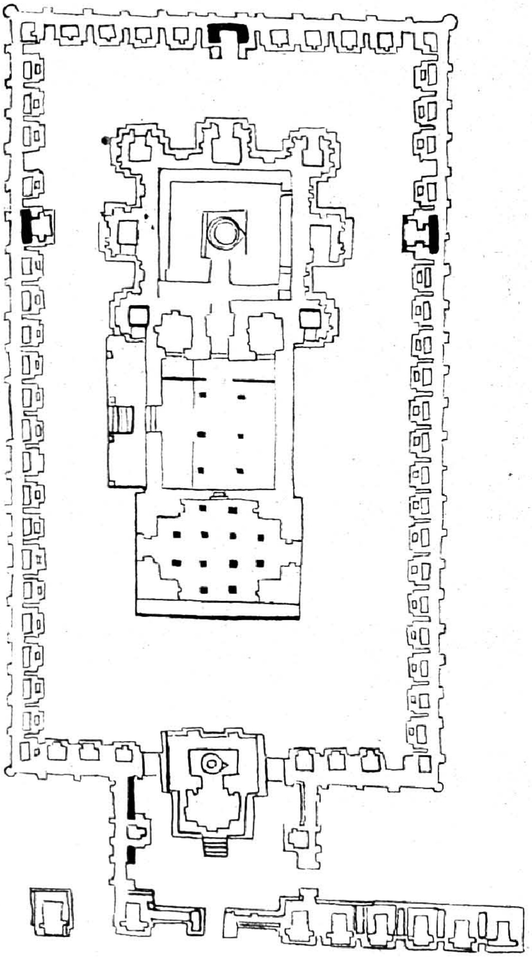


Sculpture of Siva in the garbhagriha *of the Kailasanatha temple*

structure of sandstone. The *garbhagriha* is surmounted by a pyramidal tower, known as the *vimana,* rising in tiers to a height of 50 feet; a sphere provides the finial. Little niches in the walls of the *garbhagriha* contain magnificent sculptures of Siva in his various aspects and of Durga. These niches are adorned by *makara thornas*—border decorations employing the crocodile as a motif. The intricate details of these sculptures were originally covered with stucco, as with a veil, thus considerably detracting from their beauty. Fortunately, the layers are now peeling off thus revealing the sculptures in their pristine beauty. There is a huge prismatic *linga* inside the *garbhagriha,* named after Rajasimhesvara. The sculpture of Somaskanda behind it is the best preserved and perhaps the most beautiful in the temple.

Around the *garbhagriha* and along the courtyard is a series of pretty little shrines which house sculptures of Siva, Durga and Vishnu. With the exception of a shrine in the southern corridor dedicated to Brahma and another in the northern corridor dedicated to Vishnu, (their *vimanas* resemble a horse-shoe in their shape) all the other shrines are of identical style and shape. The walls of many of these shrines were originally frescoed but of the paintings only patches now remain. They

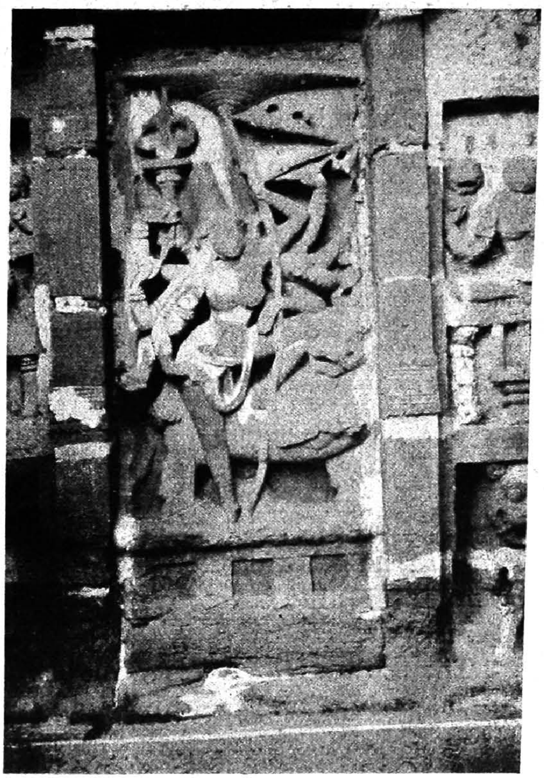
Ground plan of the Kailasanatha temple



were composed in bright colours but the walls have unfortunately been whitewashed from time to time. However, the whitewash cracks with a hard knock revealing the colours of the frescoes. It is to Professor Joveau Dubreuil that we owe the discovery of these frescoes.

The inscriptions on the walls of the *garbhagriha* around its base are as significant as the architectural features of this temple. The script employed is the Pallava *grantha* and the characters make an interesting study in calligraphy. They all bespeak the munificence of the Pallava king, his valour and his piety. The shrines around the *garbhagriha* are made up of four tiers each, and all these are inscribed with the surnames of the king. In certain cases, however, only one of the tiers carry inscriptions.

Among the Pallava temples in Kanchi, the Kailasanatha is the oldest and most characteristic of Pallava architecture. The other temples though smaller are identical in their style and plan.



Sculpture of Durga in the wall of the garbhagraha

VAIKUNTHAPERUMAL TEMPLE

Nandivarman Pallava Malla was a great devotee of Vishnu and the Vaikunthaperumal temple built by him, presumably between 755 and 790 A.D., is another important example of Pallava architecture. It was known as Paramesvaravinnagar after the builder's original name and lies near the railway station at the eastern end of the town.

The *vimana* of this temple is markedly similar to that of the Kailasanatha temple though the ground plan is different. The outer wall surrounding the temple, the small *mandapa* in front, the *mahamandapa* and the shrine dedicated to the goddess were all added to the main structure in later times. The *vimana* is surrounded by a covered walk running all round it. On the inner surface of the parapet are to be seen valuable sculptures set in two rows with a band in the middle, each row being divided into a series of panels. Formerly, these sculptures were mistakenly believed to tell a story from the *puranas* until Professor Joveau Dubreuil suggested that the significance of some of them, at any rate, may be historical rather than mytho-

logical. Following up his suggestion, I succeeded in establishing that this was a unique sculptural gallery representing the history of the Pallava dynasty. They cover the whole period, beginning with their origin (they are descended from putative ancestors in mythology) to the reign of Nandivarman Pallava. The recurrence of coronation scenes in these sculptures would seem to confirm this view. The *abhisheka* scenes in which water is poured from *chanks* or pots over the head of the kings to sanctify their ordination to the sacred office, the ornaments worn by them and their posture, etc. are all very similar in all the coronation sculptures.

The sculptures on the walls of the *garbhagriha* and within its cells depict Vishnu in his various aspects. Being of sandstone, many of them have unfortunately worn away with time. The architecture of the *vimana* is very interesting. The hollow tower encloses a flight of steps to the two upper storeys. On the first is Lord Ranganatha reclining on the coils of the serpent-god and on the second there is a figure of Vishnu standing. The columns in the wall with their lion bases and the pilasters with their Yali bases—both typical features of Pallava architecture — are neatly executed and finished. Some traces of paintings are still visible on the *kudus* and among the other motifs over the *vimana*.

Pilasters in the Kailasanatha temple

Pilasters in the Vaikunthaperumal temple

VALISVARA TEMPLE

This pretty single-celled shrine of Valisvara is situated to the west of a tank inside the Ekambaresvara

The Vaikunthaperumal temple

temple. As in the Kailasanatha temple, the plinth is built of granite and the superstructure of sandstone. A prism-shaped *linga* inside the *garbhagriha* with 32 facets and a panel behind it, depicting, in relief, Siva and Parvati, seated side by side, would conclusively establish—if proof of this fact were needed—that this was a Pallava temple.

The absence of the *avadaiyar* for this *linga* is a noteworthy feature which is characteristic of the *lingas* in the Kailasanatha and the Shore temples, the latter situated in Mamallapuram. The size of all these *lingas* is the same and their style, identical in all cases, is characteristic of the period.

The Somaskanda motif, so widely employed in Rajasimha's time, is here conspicuously absent in the panel behind the *linga*. Nevertheless, in this figure, Siva and Parvati are seated in the same way as in the Somaskanda motif. Siva is here seen with a *trisula* in one hand and a *kapala* in the other and Parvati also holds the *trisula* in her hand.

The inscriptions on the outer walls of this shrine have become illegible. But the style of architecture and the choice of motifs would suggest that the temple belonged to the first quarter of the eighth century.

The Iravathanesvara temple

IRAVASTHANESVARA TEMPLE

This temple, consisting of a single shrine with an *ardhamandapa* in front, is situated in Koṇerikuppam, a suburb of Kanchi. Its *vimana* is surmounted by a square *sikhara* with four bulls, one at each corner. The body of the temple is of granite and the tower of sandstone.

Two magnificent reliefs of Siva on the walls of the *ardhamandapa*, on either side, depict the God as Ravananugrahamurti and Urdhavatandavamurti. The style of its architecture, the prismatic *linga*, the lion pillars and the motifs enable us to conclude that the temple belongs to the second quarter of the eighth century.

MUKTESVARA TEMPLE

On the main road, about a furlong from the Vaikunthaperumal temple to its north-west, the beautiful shrine of Muktesvara is situated in the middle of a garden.

According to an inscription on the wall of the temple, dated the 28th regnal year of Nandivarman, the temple was called Dharmamahadevisvaragriham. It is evident that the reference is to king Nandivarman Pallava Malla and to one of his queens Dharmamahadevi, who built this temple. There is thus enough evidence to assume that it was constructed some time between 730 and 750 A.D.

The superstructure of this temple is built on a plinth raised about eight feet from the ground and the *antarala* is reached by a flight of steps. The *garbhagriha* is an eight-foot square containing a *linga* with the usual Somaskanda motif behind it. On the walls of the *antarala* are seen sculptures of Ravananugrahamurti and Nrittamurti, and these have unfortunately been whitewashed. Different sculptures of Siva adorn the exterior walls of the *garbhagriha*. Most of them are badly worn out and have had to be retouched with plaster. Its lion pillars, pilasters and and *toranas* serve to distinguish it as a Pallava temple, typical of its period.

MATANGESVARA TEMPLE

The shrine of Matangesvara is a short walk from the Vaikunthaperumal temple to its south-west and is partially hidden by coconut trees. It is identical, almost detail for detail, with Muktesvara's shrine. Its *antarala* is supported by four lion pillars, two of which are inscribed. The epigraphs, each of which consists of four letters, may be assumed to represent the *birudas* or surnames of the builder, whose identity has not yet been established. However, since its architecture is identical with that of the Muktesvara temple, we can safely assign it to the last quarter of eighth century.

AIRAVATISVARA TEMPLE

The shrine of Airavatisvara, which is now in ruins, is situated on the Rajavithi overlooking the Kachisvara temple. Its *vimana* has disappeared, but the *garbhagriha* and the plinth, which are its only remains, are characteristic of Pallava architecture.

CHAPTER III

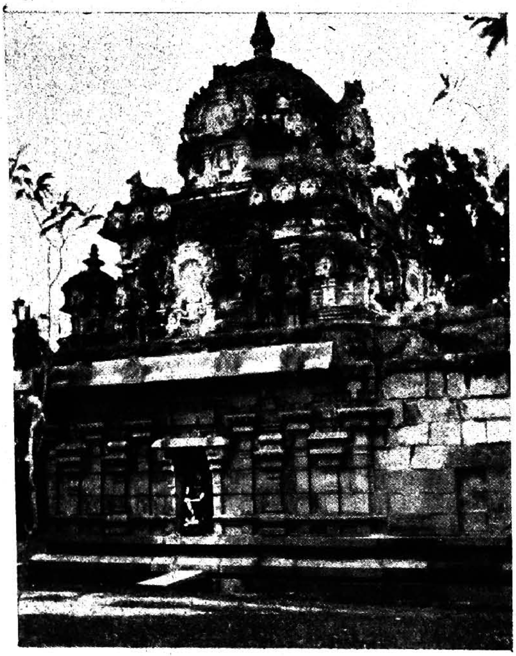
CHOLA MONUMENTS

THE CONTRIBUTION of the Cholas, who followed the Pallavas, to the monumental art of Kanchi was no less significant than that of their predecessors. Admittedly, none of the Chola sculptures are comparable to those in the Kailasanatha and Vaikunthaperumal temples. Again, their *gopuras* are not as massive or as imposing as those built by the Vijayanagara kings. Yet, the modest little shrines in Kanchi built by the Cholas are of considerable value for architecture.

It would be well-nigh impossible to refer the Chola temples to any exact date. Their peculiar architecture and the inscriptions they bear, however, help us a great deal in determining the date of their origin to an approximation. I do not propose here to discuss all the Chola monuments, for many of them are almost identical. I shall, therefore, confine this discussion to the more representative ones.

The Sokkisvara temple lies in close vicinity to the Kamakshi temple and is built of cut granite without any cementing material. It was a peculiar feature of the architecture of the Cholas that they did not use any cementing material in their monuments. The Vijayalaya Colesvara shrine at Narthmalai and the Polonnoruwa Siva Davale in Ceylon, both built during the time of Raja Raja, the great Chola king, bear out this general rule.

The circular dome over the square *vimana* of the Sokkisvara shrine is unfortunately in very bad repair and the shrine is overgrown with weeds and trees. The *toranas* round the niches, with either a *linga* or a bull in the centre of the medallion, are tastefully executed. This beautiful shrine needs to be renovated and should be declared a "protected monument". An inscription on its walls, dated the 15th regnal year of Parakesari, would suggest that it was built some time between 850 and 900.

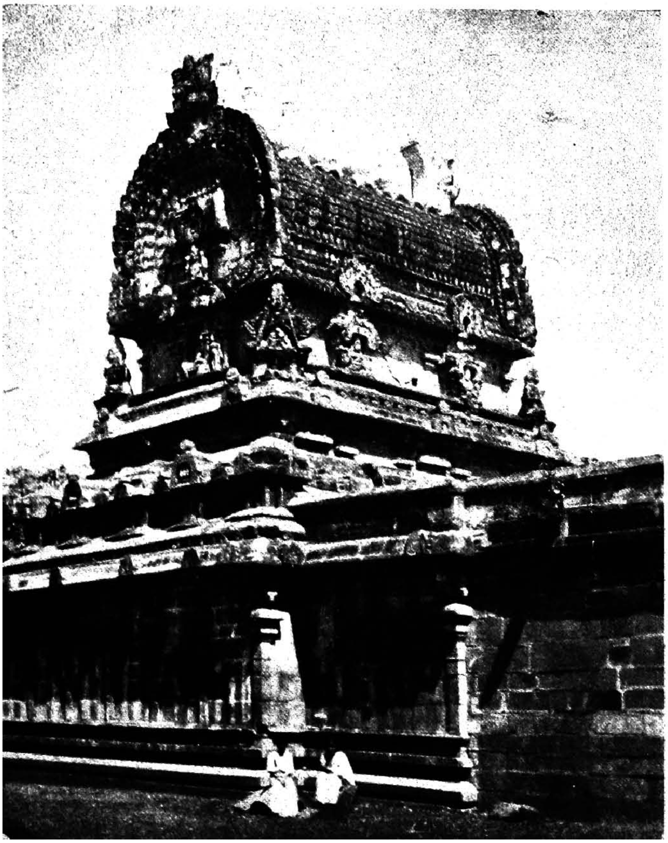


The temple of Anekathangavadam

ANEKATHANGAVADAM TEMPLE

Enclosed in a compound which was built in recent times, the shrine of Anekathangavadam is dedicated to Siva, and it is here that Sambandar and, after him, Sundaramurthi came to worship Siva. It was built presumably during the time of Kulottunga I who ruled between the years 1070 and 1120. This temple, which typifies Chola art of the twelfth century, provides a link between the Sokkisvara and Jwaraharesvara temples. The *munai* capital, which was to become a florid feature of later Chola art, is foreshadowed in this temple.

The Pandavaperumal temple



PANDAVAPERUMAL TEMPLE

The hymns of the Vaishnava *alvars* refer to this temple as Tiruppadagam or Padagam; the inscriptions on the temple also call it by the same name. The sanctuary was built some time during the seventh century; the existing structure, however, with the main cell of granite and its barrel-shaped dome built of brick and mortar belongs to the Chola period. From the peculiar style of architecture in evidence at the *garbhagriha* and the epigraphs on its walls, one can safely assume, that it was built during the reign of Kulottunga I. The pilasters and corbels are undoubtedly Chola while the ornate stucco over the dome has clearly been done in recent years. The *mahamandapa* and other parts of the shrine are also later additions.

This shrine of Vishnu is at a distance of four furlongs from the

Ekambaresvara temple to its south-west.

JWARAHARESVARA TEMPLE

This shrine, which is dedicated to the worship of Siva (Jwaraharesvara literally means "the god who wards off fever"), lies between the Ekambaresvara and Pandavaperumal temples ; it is easily distinguished from the others by its circular *garbhagriha*. Originally built of cut granite without cement, it has had to be repaired by the Archaeological Survey of India.

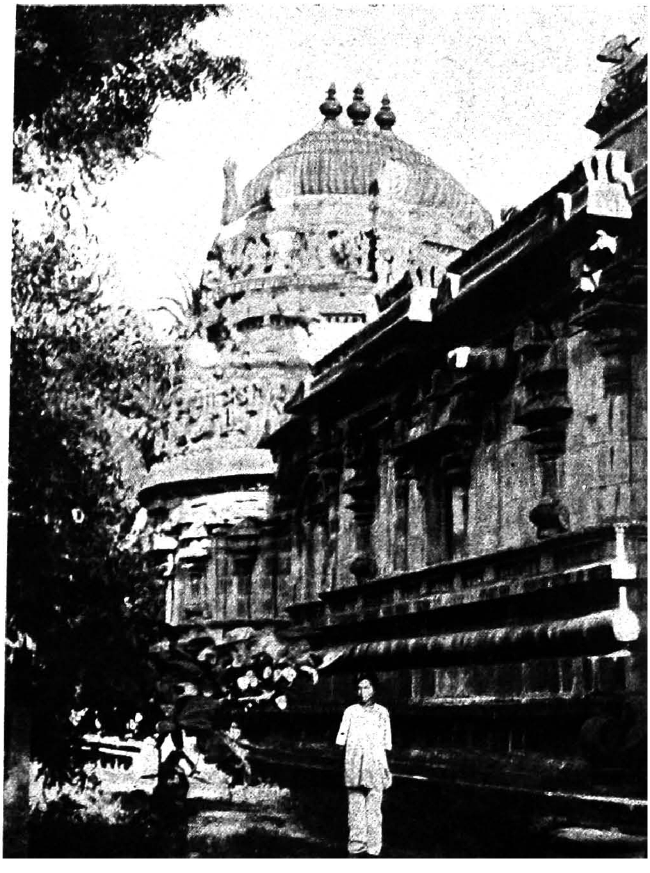
Some of the characteristic decorative features of later Chola art, such as the *kumbhapanjaram* (a kind of pilaster with an ornate vase below) and the *tarangubodigai* (a curved corbel) are found in this temple. Both the shrine and the *mahamandapa* may be assigned to the reign of Kulottunga III (1178-1216).

ANANTAN SHRINE

This modest shrine built in memory of Anantalvar, a great devotee of Vishnu, is situated within the precincts of the Varadaraja temple. The temple is of granite and the square portion of the *vimana* is surmounted by a circular dome with a finial on top. The small *mandapa* in front of the *garbhagriha* is supported by four pillars executed in typical Chola style with the Nagabhanda motif. An inscription on the wall of the shrine, dated the 35th regnal year of Kulottunga III, indicates that this shrine was built in 1212 by Siyaganga, a feudatory chief.

The dilapidated shrine of Sokkisvara

The Jwaraharesvara temple



CHAPTER IV

VIJAYANAGARA MONUMENTS

IN KANCHI, the Vijayanagara kings hardly ever built new shrines. Their contribution to the architectural art of Kanchi thus consisted mostly of additions to existing shrines and their renovation. Tall and massive *gopuras* and elaborately carved *mandapas* are the outstanding features of Vijayanagara architecture. Kanchi can boast of some of the best specimens of this period.

Krishnadevaraya (1509-1530), the greatest of the Vijayanagara kings, constructed the southern *gopura* of the Ekambaresvara temple, one of the largest and the tallest in South India. Consisting of nine storeys, it is about 188 feet high. It has several architectural features in common with the Vitthala temple at Hampi and the Rayar Gopura at Chidambaram.

In front of the *garbhagriha* in the Ekambaresvara temple, the *kalyanmandapa* faces the Krishnadevaraya Gopura. this *mandapa* was added to the temple during the Vijayanagara period. The characteristic miniature towers over this *mandapa* are identical with those in Hampi. In fact, miniature towers of brick and mortar and highly ornate pillars are characteristic features of Vijayanagara temple architecture.

The Vijayanagara emblem consisted of a boar facing a dagger with the sun and a crescent on top. Sculptural representations of it on granite slabs can be found in Kanchi. An examination of the exterior walls of the Ekambaresvara temple reveals a number of Vijayanagara crests sculptured on stones which have now been built into the wall. There is no doubt that these granite stones were salvaged from dilapidated Vijayanagara monuments elsewhere.

According to an inscription dated 1393, Harihara of the Vijayanagara dynasty built the *vimana* of the Kamakshi temple. Subsequently, however, minor repairs were effected but its main features have been preserved.

The beautiful *amai mandapa* (meaning a tortoise hall) with its intricately decorated pillars was pre-

sumably built about the same time as the *vimana* of the Kamakshi temple. This pillared hall contains a tortoise in granite under a canopy of stone.

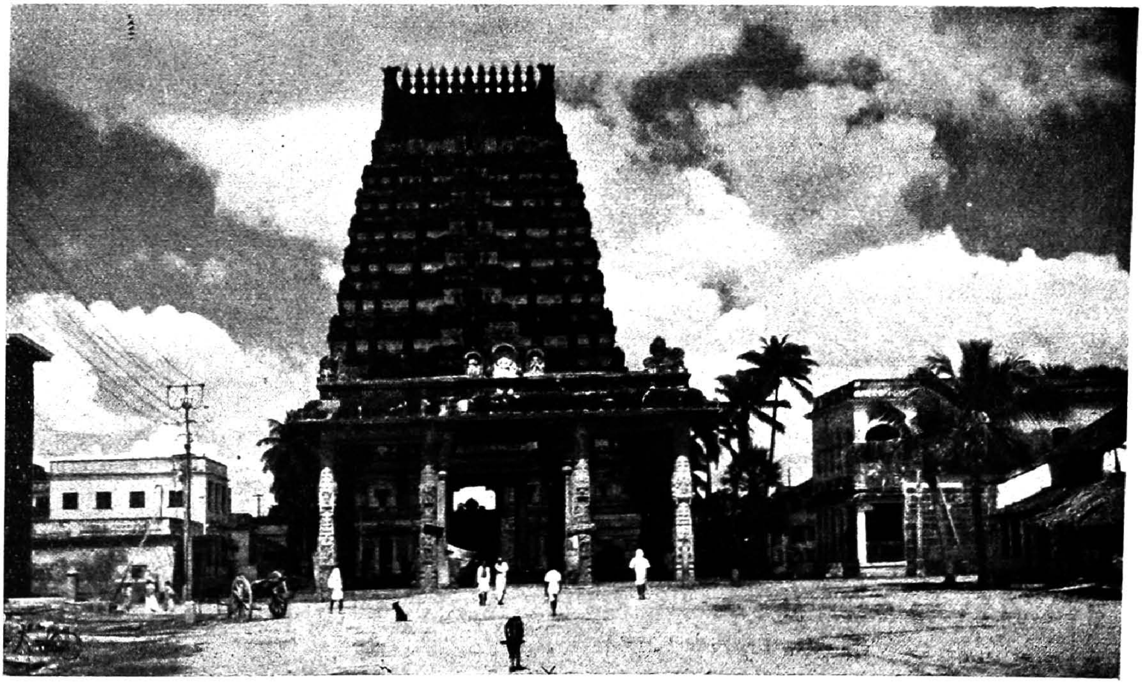
We owe the hall of a hundred pillars in the Varadaraja temple of exquisite workmanship to the Vijayanagara kings. The beautiful double pillars in this hall with figures of riders on horseback carved on them in intricate detail and the chains cut in single granite stones decorating the corners of the *mandapa* evidence the skill of the Vijayanagara artisans. This *mandapa* is the first thing that strikes the visitor as he enters the temple.

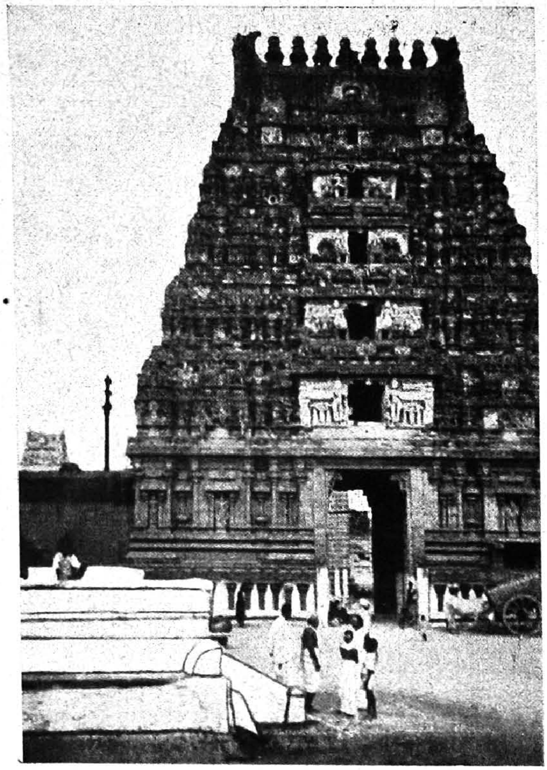
The gopura of the Varadaraja temple

THREE GREAT TEMPLES

The Ekambaresvara, the Kamakshi

The Ekambaresvara temple





East gopura *of the Kamakshi temple*

and the Varadaraja temples are popularly known as the three great temples of Kanchi, and they are so both in sanctity and size.

The Ekambaresvara temple situated in Siva Kanchi was, to begin with, a small shrine and *mandapas*, walls and *gopuras* were progressively added to it during later times. Kulottunga III made several such additions to the temple and so did Krishnadevaraya after him ; with the result that while the temple swelled in size, it became ungainly and incongruous. Mr Ferguson rightly says of this temple : "No two *gopuras* are opposite one another, no two walls parallel and there is hardly a right angle about the place. All this creates a picturesqueness of effect seldom surpassed in these temples, but deprives it of the dignity we might expect from such parts if properly arranged."

The *linga* of sandstone in the sanctum is never washed as in the other temples. During the wars waged by the French, the temple, its eastern *gopura* in particular, seems to have been hit by cannon shots.

KAMAKSHI TEMPLE

Kamakshi, the goddess with "eyes of love", compels the attention of every visitor to Kanchi. We find no reference to the shrine of Kamakshi in the Pallava inscriptions of the

South gopura *of the Ekambaresvara temple*

seventh century. A few Buddha images were discovered in the *prakara* of the temple and the late Mr Gopinath Rao, therefore, made the interesting suggestion that this temple might have been originally dedicated to the worship of Taradevi (a Buddhist goddess of the Tantric sect); but, as with many other temples of an alien faith, it was later converted into a Hindu temple. The thesis of Mr Gopinatha Rao is further supported by the history of the temple. During the eighth century, Sankara is said to have defeated the Buddhists in Kanchi in a philosophical argument and it is not unlikely that the debate was held in the Kamakshi temple; it was also at this time that he founded the Kamakoti Pitha. The only image of Sankara in Kanchi is to be found in the Kamakshi shrine.

Since the fourteenth century, the temple of Kamakshi has undergone extensive renovations. There is nothing of much archaeological interest in it besides its eastern *gopura*, the *amai mandapa* and the *vimana* over the central shrine.

VARADARAJA TEMPLE

It was during the twelfth century that this temple became important and since then it has remained a stronghold of the Vaishnava faith, This temple, which incorporates both Chola and Vijayanagara structures, is distinguished by its stone walls and ornate pillars.

Of all the temples in Kanchi, the Varadaraja temple is most well provided with funds and some very fine jewels are a part of its property held by its trustees. A necklace is said to have been presented to the temple by Lord Clive and it adorns the deity when it is taken out in procession every year.

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CHAPTER V

BUDDHIST AND JAIN RELICS

THOUGH scattered Buddhist relics have been discovered in Kanchi now and again, no *vihara* has so far been unearthed. Since it is certain that *viharas* flourished in Kanchi during the earlier part of its history, trial excavations are bound to reveal some surviving traces of them. In this chapter, I shall briefly discuss the Buddhist images that have been discovered in Kanchi including those that have been brought to light in recent times.

There is an image of the Buddha measuring about two feet in length, known as the Parinirvana Buddha, on the outer *prakara* wall of the Ekambaresvara temple. Though the face is damaged, the *prabha* over the Buddha's head, the *ushnisha*, the cushions on which his head and feet are rested and the small female figure at his feet are especially interesting features about this image. There is another image of the Buddha on the inner side of the northern wall of the same *prakara* adjoining the *nandavana*, the flower-garden. Sculptured on the *prakara* wall of the same temple, near one of the entrances, are seven sedentary Buddhas. Clearly, all the images found in this temple must have, at some time past, belonged to a Buddhist shrine in the vicinity.

There is an exquisite image of a seated Buddha under a tree inside the compound of the police station at Siva Kanchi. This Dhyani Buddha (Buddha in meditation) sitting on a *padmasana* (the lotus-seat) is a particularly dignified representation of him.

Some time ago, a standing Buddha about eight feet high wearing a toga and with its hands broken, was discovered in the *prakara* of the Kamakshi temple ; it has now been removed to the Government Museum at Madras. This image is markedly similar to those found in Ceylon. Also there are two badly broken statues of the Buddha in the outer *prakara* of the same temple. Their heads are missing and are not to be found anywhere around; the posture of both

these images is sedentary. They have been relegated to a place near the tank and lie there neglected.

In a private garden adjoining the Kamakshi temple is a fairly large statue of the Buddha seated in the dhyana attitude.

In the precincts of the Karukkil Amaranda Amman shrine there are two images of the Buddha, both in good repair, one in the *dhyana* attitude and the other in the *bhusparsamudra* posture with one of its palms touching the earth.

All these images are of granite unlike those found in Amaravati or Nagarjunikonda in the Guntur district. With one or two exceptions, all the other images exhibit features which definitely belong to a later period in architecture. Among the Buddhist relics in Kanchi, there are curiously enough, no *jataka* panels or friezes like those found at Amaravati.

Dhyani Buddha on the grounds of the Kanchi police station

Image of the Buddha on the outer wall of the Ekambaresvara temple

The vimana of the Chandraprabha temple

There is a great deal of scope for further detailed research on the Buddhist relics in Kanchi.

JAINA TEMPLES

Among their *tirthankaras* or teachers, the Jains recognize 24 whom they deify and worship. Quite often a whole temple is dedicated to the worship of one of these.

The smaller of the two Jaina temples in Tiruparauttikunram belongs to the Pallava period and the other to the early Chola period. However, the *mandapa* in the latter was added to the temple by the Vijayanagara kings.

The smaller temple is devoted to the worship of Chandraprabha, the eighth *thirthankara*. This temple closely resembles the Siva and Vishnu temples in the city and was probably even fashioned after them. Like the Kailasanatha temple, it is built of sandstone ; it further incorporates other exclusively Pallava features, such as the pilasters with lion-bases and the curved corbels. This temple, like the one for Vaikunthaperumal, has an upper storey surmounted by a *vimana* of brick and mortar. The sanctum of the great teacher is in the first floor and his image has unhappily been covered with thick stucco in recent times. Enshrined in the same sanctum are two other images on either side of Chandraprabha ; one is of Kunthanatha in marble and the other of Vardhamana, in granite. Like other Pallava temples, this has been repaired periodically. All the available evidence suggests that it was built some time between 700 and 730.

VARDHAMANA TEMPLE

An apsidal monument enshrines a not very skilfully executed wooden image of Vardhamana, the twenty-fourth *tirthankara*. Of the two other temples standing on either side of Vardhamana's shrine, one is dedicated

Frescoes in the Vardhamana temple depicting scenes from the lives of tirthankaras

to Pushpadanta and the other to Dharmadevi.

The *ardhamandapa* attached to this temple must have been constructed during the reign of Kulottunga I (1070-1120). Its most interesting feature is the *sangita mandapa* with its high roof and the valuable paint-

ings on its ceiling were executed during the Vijayanagara period. Its pillars, though they belong to the same period, are neither elaborate nor ornate. An inscription on one of the walls of the *mandapa* announces that the shrine was built during 1387-1388 by Irugappa, a general and minister of Bukka Raya II, as desired by Pushpasena, his preceptor. It also specified that the *mandapa* was exclusively to be used for holding musical concerts.

It is impossible not to notice the small figure of the builder sculptured on one of the pillars in the *mandapa*. The great general is depicted as a humble, devout and ascetic figure; these qualities adequately sum up his attitude to his master, Pushpasena.

The paintings on the ceiling of the *sangita mandapa* are arranged in groups of two; one set along the north-south line and the other along the east-west line. The *mukhamandapa* contains similar paintings. Here the figures are arranged in panels with a thin band separating the two rows; each band bears a label explaining the incident portrayed. These paintings depict scenes from the lives of the *thirthankaras*, particularly those of Vardhamana, Rishabhadeva and Neminatha.

CHAPTER VI

EXCAVATIONS

THOUGH Kanchi abounds in monuments of various periods, surprisingly enough, hardly any systematic excavations have been undertaken in that part of the country.

Looking for Pallava monuments, I had a trial pit, measuring 15 by 11 feet, dug in an extensive piece of raised ground near Pillaipalayam; this mound is locally known as Palimedu and tradition has it that the remains of an ancient palace lie buried here. Furthermore, certain references to it in ancient literature support this view. The trial excavation produced only a portion of a brick wall; the large-sized bricks it was built of were, however, identical with the bricks of the Pallava period discovered at Mamallapuram, Kuram and other places. I also unearthed broken pieces of ivory bangles, thin tiles and a few blocks of pebble and mortar. Further investigation also yielded capitals of granite and sandstone pillars; these are undoubtedly of Pallava origin.

I understand from Professor Dubreuil that, as early as 1927, he had unearthed a few Buddhist pillars of marble in the neighbourhood of the Kailasanatha temple. I had a few trial pits dug at the same spot but did not come by anything particularly valuable, except a few marble chips. The belief, that the remains of Buddhist *viharas* lie buried somewhere in Kanchi has thus been, in a measure, authenticated by Professor Dubreuil's discovery. I am almost certain that exhaustive excavations will reveal such a *vihara* or, at least, significant remains of it.

Another such spot which is believed to contain the remains of a chola *maligai* (palace) is in the vicinity of the Siva temple at Tirukkalimedu.

Appendix A

TEMPLES IN KANCHI

PALLAVA PERIOD

	Temple	*Dedicated to*	*Builder*	*When Built*
1	Kailasanatha	Siva	Rajasimha	700-720
2	Mahendravarmesvaragriham	Siva	Mahendra	720-735
3	Vaikunthaperumal	Vishnu	Pallava Malla	755-790
4	Valisvara	Siva	Unknown	700-740
5	Iravasthanesvara	Siva	Unknown	720-740
6	Muktesvara	Siva	Queen of Pallava Malla	730-753
7	Matangesvara	Siva	Rajasimha	700-720
8	Airavadesvara	Siva	Unknown	710-720
9	Trisurantakesvara	Siva	Unknown	700-720
10	Jalandharesvara	Siva	Unknown	700-720

CHOLA PERIOD

1	Sokkisvara	Siva	Parakesari	850-900
2	Anekathangavadam	Siva	Kulottunga I	1070-1120
3	Pandavaperumal	Vishnu	Kulottunga I	1070-1120
4	Jwaraharesvara	Siva	Kulottunga III	1178-1216
5	Anantan Shrine	Alvar	Kulottunga III	1212

VIJAYANAGARA PERIOD

1	South Gopura at Ekambaresvara	Krishnadevaraya	1520
2	Kalyanamandapa at Ekambaresvara	..	1520-1530
3	Vimana Mandapa	Harihara II	1393
4	Amai Mandapa	..	1500
5	Pillared hall at Varadaraja	Unknown	1530

Appendix B

MOSQUES

Here and there in Kanchi, there are a few mosques adjoining the Hindu temples and these serve to remind the visitor of the brief Mohammadan rule over the city. Of a dozen such mosques, the earliest is perhaps the one that faces the Ekambaresvara temple. One has only cursorily to look at its interior to conclude that this place must have been at one time a place of Hindu worship. Its pillars and other architectural features are characteristically Hindu. There is another old mosque adjacent to the Vaikunthaperumal temple and a third in the neighbourhood of the police station at Siva Kanchi.

If the inscriptions on the walls of these mosques and tradition relating to their origin be studied systematically, I am sure much useful information could be obtained about the Mohammadan period in Kanchi.

PULLALORE

This suburb of Kanchi is part of the Conjeevaram *taluka* and is at a distance of about ten miles from the city. It is here that Mahendravarman I scored a victory against an enemy whose identity still remains unknown to us. The battle was presumably fought some time between 635 and 660. Some scholars have suggested that it was the Chalukyas who were beaten while others believe that it was an incursion of the Gangas that was warded off by the Pallava king. Two other battles were waged in the same field during the British period. It was here that, in 1780 the forces of Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan routed the British army under Colonel Baillie who was trying to establish contact with Sir Hector Munro at Conjeevaram. The palmyra trees in this locality still bear the marks of cannon shots fired during the battle. In 1781, another battle was fought between Sir Eyre Coote and Hyder Ali. There are some who believe that Sir Eyre emerged victorious from it while others contend that the battle was drawn. Some of the visitors to Polilore, as the village is alternatively called, often pick up some valuable souvenirs, such as coins and small cannon balls.

MAMANDUR

This village situated at a distance of about six miles from Conjeevaram has a large tank and extensive cultivated areas. The tank, called Chitrameghatataka; was named after Chitramegha, one of the numerous surnames adopted by Mahendravarman. Since the days of the Pallavas, this tank has been used for purposes of irrigation. And near this tank is a series of small hillocks. On excavation, more than four of them turned out to be cave temples, two of which date from the period of Mahendravarman I. We understand from inscriptions on the walls of the first temple that Mahendravarman was a musician and a playwright. The more valuable part of these inscriptions has, however, been lost to us. In its plan and

architectural features, it resembles the other cave structures built by Mahendravarman in other parts of South India. The images of *Dwarapalas,* one on either side, guard the entrance and appear strong and formidable. The facades of the caves were originally painted red and green though only patches of the colours now remain.

KURAM

This village lies at a distance of nine miles from Conjeevaram and is celebrated as the birth-place of Kurathalvar, a well-known disciple of Ramanuja. A Vishnu and a Siva temple of the Pallava period are extant in this village. The latter, is in ruins, except for its apsidal roof of granite and a few pillars, which are intact. This shrine has been identified as contemporaneous with the Vidyavinita Pallava Paramesvaragriham, built by Vidyavinita during the reign of Parmesvaravarman I; Vidyavinita has now been identified as a member of the Pallava royal family. The granite pillars bear the inscriptions made by Paramesvaravarman's successors.

The temple built for the worship of Vishnu belongs obviously to a much later period and bear inscriptions by the later Pallavas and the early Cholas. Built of granite and sandstone, it contains a number of Yali pillars. The walls of the *garbhagriha* have been replastered in recent times with the result that the relief-sculptures of Vishnu on the walls are completely covered over. The finial consists of four *garudas,* (*garuda* is a bird which is believed to have been Vishnu's vehicle) placed one on each corner and the sanctum contains an image of Vishnu in a standing posture.

Appendix C

HINTS TO TRAVELLERS

Conjeevaram which is at a distance of 45 miles from Madras to its south-west can be reached both by train and by road. Of the two motorable roads leading to the city, which are equally good, the road via Sriperumbudur is shorter and preferred for that reason. There are regular train and bus services between the two cities, and Chingleput, an intermediate station, is adequately served by catering establishments which offer both Indian and European food. There are two travellers' bungalows—one near the station and another at a distance of seven miles from it—available for the use of tourists and Government officials. Those who wish to avail themselves of these facilities would do well to request the Collector of the district for permission well ahead of time. Both Siva and Vishnu Kanchi have a number of choultries or *chatrams* for the use of Hindu pilgrims and travellers. The exclusive use of rooms can be had on the payment of a small sum; they also offer boarding facilities. In addition to these there are a number of restaurants and cafes in the city.

If the visitor has the use of a motor car, an excursion to all the important monuments can be accomplished in a single day. The main roads in the city are safe for motor cars though rather dusty. Conjeevaram has an efficient municipal administration and is provided with electricity and protected water supply. The peak season are the *utsava* days in May and June. The city is then a place of great repair and pilgrims from all parts of South India gather here in their thousands.

LIST A

We suggest that those who come to Conjeevaram through Sriperumbudur visit the monuments in the following order and that others, who come to Conjeevaram by car through Chingleput, reverse this order.

1 Ekambaresvara
2 Valisvara
3 The Buddha in the Siva Kanchi police station
4 Pandavaperumal
5 Tripurantakesvara
6 Jwaraharesvara
7 Kachisvara
8 Airavadesvara
9 Matangesvara
10 Vaikunthaperumal
11 Muktesvara
12 Ulagalanda Perumal
13 Sokkisvara
14 Kamakshi
15 Iravasthanam
16 Jalandharesvara
17 Kailasanatha
18 Anekathangavadam
19 Tirumerrali
20 Jaina temples at Tiruparutti-kunram
21 Statues of the Buddha at Karukkil Amaranda Amman shrine
22 Tiruveha
23 Ashtabhujakaram
24 Varadarajaperumal

LIST B

We suggest that those who come to Kanchi by train visit the monuments in the following order :

1 Vaikunthaperumal
2 Matangesvara
3 Muktesvara
4 Utagalanda Perumal
5 Kamakshi
6 Sokkisvara
7 Iravasthanam
8 Jalandharesvara
9 The Buddha in the Siva Kanchi police station
10 Ekambaresvara
11 Valisvara
12 Pandava Perumal
13 Tripurantakesvara
14 Jwaraharesvara
15 Airavadesvara
16 Kachisvara
17 Kailasanatha
18 Anekathangavadam
19 Tirumerrali
20 Jaina temples at Tirupparitti-kunram
21 Statues of the Buddha at Karuk-kil Amaranda Ammam shrine
22 Tiruveha
23 Ashtabhujakaram
24 Varadarajaperumal

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About the Author

Until her untimely death in March 1940, Dr C. Minakshi, the author of this booklet, was Assistant Professor of History at the Maharani's College for Women at Bangalore. She was the first lady to receive her Ph.D. Degree from Madras University.

Dr Minakshi was a well-known Tamil and Sanskrit scholar besides being highly proficient in Carnatic Music. She was a leading member of the Archæological Society of South India and delivered a series of Extension Lectures at the Universities of Mysore and Travancore.

Her extensive collection of South Indian coins are now preserved by Travancore University and is known as the "Minakshi Collection".

In 1938, Dr Minakshi was requested by the Government of India to write a Memoir on the sculptures of the Vaikunthaperumal temple at Conjeevaram.

Her published works include :

Administration and Social Life under the Pallavas; Madras University Historical Series; No. 13, 1939.

Historical Sculptures of the Vaikunthaperumal at Kanchi; Memoirs of the Archæological Survey of India, No. 63; posthumously published in 1941.

She was an exceptionally brilliant scholar, easily the best among Indian lady archæologists, and by her untimely death Indian archæology loses a singularly gifted votary.

—THE LATE DR K. N. DIKSHIT,
Retired Director General of Archæology

In her death the world of scholarship has lost a great research scholar. I have been always struck by her passionate love for Indian culture and history to which she has made some very valuable contribution.

—MR O. C. GANGOLI

The late Dr Minakshi was a scholar of rare promise and her premature death is a great loss to Indian historical scholarship.

—DR C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR

The Memoirs of the Vaikunthaperumal Temple is one more proof of the great talent of Dr Minakshi, and a poignant reminder of the great loss that the world of learning in general and the Maharani's College in particular have suffered.

—THE LATE MR N. S. SUBBA RAO

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